

REMARKS

Applicant's attorney is appreciative of the interview granted by Examiners Tugbang and Hess on January 11, 2008. Stefan Trube, a representative of the Assignee, was also present. The discussion at that interview resulted in amendments to claim 15, as will be discussed below.

Claims 15-24 and 26-30 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Bennett et al in view of Loprire. In addition, Claims 15-24 and 26-30 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Shinchu in view of Moll et al.

At the interview, Applicant's representatives explained the invention is directed to a method for an electrically conductive connection of at least two wires provided with an insulating lacquer in which the wires are placed in contact with each other, partially enclosed within an electrically conductive material, arranged between an anvil and a sonotrode of an ultrasonic welding device, and subjected to ultrasonic energy, causing relative movement between the wires and between the wires and the conductive material, causing deformation of the electrically conductive material and causing the insulating lacquer of the wires to be broken away, with the formation of a fixed connection between the wires and the electrically conductive material.

The Examiners took the position that Claim 15 did not fully recite that the wires must be in contact with each other, and Claim 15 has now been amended to clarify that the wires are in contact with each other prior to the welding.

The Bennett et al reference uses resistance welding, rather than ultrasonic welding, and does not place the wires to be welded in contact with each other. Indeed, as shown in Figure 1, the conductors to be welded are separated by a metallic penetrator 18 in the form of a 50 mesh brass screen. While the wires are coated with an enamel insulation, the penetrator becomes heated by the thermal heat from the welding

electrodes, vaporizing the bonded insulation from the surface of the wires, and ultimately melting the wires and the penetrator to form a metallurgical bond (see col. 3, lines 3-39).

Loprire does show ultrasonic welding in which wires are in contact, but the wires are not coated with an insulating lacquer, but rather with a thermoplastic material, which melts and flowably displaces, as disclosed in paragraph [0035]. Thus, Loprire also does not disclose or suggest that lacquer coated wires may be ultrasonically welded by placing the lacquer coated wires in contact with each other and within an electrically conductive material.

The Shinchu reference discloses ultrasonic welding of a plurality of wires, but each of the wires is placed within an individual connector as shown in Figure 7. The wires, moreover, are coated with a thermoplastic material which is melted when heated. The wires are clearly not in contact with each other during the ultrasonic treatment.

The Moll et al reference discloses a method for bonding a single lacquer insulated wire to a metallic support in which the wire is exposed to ultrasonic energy so that the lacquer is broken up. However, after the ultrasonic treatment, the area of deformation is enclosed with a thixotropic adhesive. Accordingly, Moll et al does not suggest that the ultrasonic treatment is suitable for reliably bonding a plurality of wires in contact with each other.

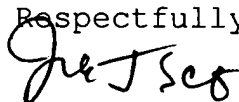
As discussed at the interview, the most relevant of the references of record in this application may be DE 3338757, also to Moll. This reference shows ultrasonic welding of a plurality of lacquer insulated wires in a sleeve, but like the other cited references, Moll also does not disclose or suggest that the wires should be placed in contact with each other prior to the welding. In fact, Moll shows that the wires must be fixed in a specific pattern prior to welding, a

configuration which is much more difficult to achieve in practice than merely placing the wires in contact with each other within a sleeve.

Accordingly, the references of record do not disclose or suggest the claimed invention, and withdrawal of these rejections is requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that the present application is now in condition for allowance. An early allowance of the application with amended claims is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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